

Ruby Garner Lee Selected as “Extra Mile” Award Winner

Even though she holds a degree designed for the classroom, Ruby Lee Garner chose a different career path for one reason: she wanted to be a social worker. “I love people,” she said. Mrs. Lee’s personal approach and her sense of duty to those in need has singled her out as the Alabama Medicaid Agency’s “Extra Mile” Award winner for the first quarter 2006 (January - March).



Alabama Medicaid Commissioner Carol Herrmann-Steckel presents the Extra Mile Award to Ruby Garner Lee, left, Feb. 28, 2006.

The “Extra Mile” Award is given quarterly to an outstanding Medicaid employee who has gone beyond his/her assigned job duties. Nominated by a supervisor or co-workers, the recipient is chosen through a selection committee of Agency employees.

“Mrs. Lee went the extra mile for the Agency in helping people who had lost everything and had nowhere to go,” said Annie Smith, Central Regional Coordinator of Family Certification Division, who nominated her for the award. “We are proud to have Mrs. Lee as a member of the Family Certification team and a part of the Alabama Medicaid Agency.”

A Medicaid Eligibility Specialist Senior, Mrs. Lee has worked for four years as a floater in the Family Certification Division where her duties involve accepting and reviewing applications for Medicaid. When volunteers were needed to help Hurricane Katrina last September, Mrs. Lee was one of the first to volunteer, taking applications and coordinating the workflow at the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) in Birmingham’s Boutwell Auditorium.

“I saw a side of me that I didn’t know existed,” Mrs. Lee said of the time immediately following the hurricane. Sometimes working at the DRC after hours and during the weekend, Mrs. Lee even went so far as to postpone her honeymoon to continue to volunteer. Although during this time one of her sisters died of lung cancer, Mrs. Lee resumed working with the same dedication and love for God and humanity that she had before, “I just treat others as if I was in their situation.” Currently, her son is in treatment for cancer, “My son is my hero,” Mrs. Lee says, “he is brave and keeps going, despite the pain.”

Mrs. Lee graduated from UAB with a degree in secondary education and a minor in business administration. She worked for 10 years at the Department of Human Resources before joining Medicaid. A newlywed, Mrs. Lee recently married minister and police officer husband, Jimmie Lee, in 2005. Besides her adult son and daughter, her family now boasts six additional children. She has been a dedicated member, usher and vacation bible school teacher at the Twenty-Sixth Street Baptist Church in Jasper for more than 10 years, and she loves to read in her spare time.